

STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. I-29-00

April 13, 2000

The following is offered in response to your letter in which you seek a formal interpretation of the requirements regarding existing masonry chimneys when utilized to vent a single gas appliance (water heater) after multiple fuel-fired appliances have been removed. You reference the exception to subsection (a) of section 7.5.4 of NFPA 54-1996, the referenced standard incorporated into the Connecticut Gas Equipment and Piping Code.

Question: Is it necessary to investigate the size of an existing masonry chimney for a new single appliance when multiple fuel-fired appliances have been removed and no longer vent into such a chimney?

Answer: Yes. Section 801.19 of the 1996 International Mechanical Code (IMC) portion of the 1999 State Building Code states, in part, that when a fuel-fired appliance is disconnected from an existing chimney or vent serving multiple fuel-fired appliances, such chimney or vent shall be re-sized as necessary to control flue-gas condensation in the interior of the chimney or vent and to provide the remaining appliances served with the required draft. The exception to subsection (a) of section 7.5.4 of NFPA 54-1996 only applies when an appliance is replaced by an appliance of similar type, input rating and efficiency. If any of the three factors are not similar to the appliance being replaced, including the fact that other fuel-fired appliances have been removed, the chimney must be re-evaluated in accordance with section 801.19 of the IMC.